

CPYRGHT

That Other Vietnamese Battle

Maj. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale would be the first to acknowledge that a miracle is expected of him during his new reassignment to South Viet-Nam and that miracles in Southeast Asia these days are mighty hard to come by.

Nevertheless, his appointment as special assistant to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge is a salutary thing. He is a controversial practitioner of psychological warfare. His unorthodox counseling of the late Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay in the Philippines' struggle for survival against its Communist challenge, the Huks, inspired the hero's role, "Col. Hillendale," in that equally controversial book *The Ugly American*.

To Ed Lansdale, any war is no bigger than the people for whom it is being fought. Writing in *Foreign Affairs* last October, with both his CIA and Pentagon assignments behind him, the General declared:

The Communists have let loose a revolutionary idea in Viet-Nam . . . that . . . will not die

by being ignored, bombed or smothered by us . . . In a revolutionary or peoples' war, such as the war in Viet-Nam, where the enemy is embedded within the population, the lasting quality needed for a win is the *voluntary* action of the population in joining together with the government forces, and with the American influence coming from respect and trust earned by the spirit in which Americans give their help . . .

Perhaps the most valuable and realistic gift that Americans can give Viet Nam is to concentrate above everything else on helping the Vietnamese leadership create the conditions which will encourage the discovery and most rapid possible development of a patriotic cause so genuine that the Vietnamese willingly will pledge to it "their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor."

Ambassador Lodge undoubtedly was persuaded by the General's thesis in getting the President to approve the Lansdale mission over Pentagon objections. General Lansdale now should be given every encouragement in his pursuit of miracles.